



PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

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**PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD DEFENDANT SENTENCED TO
MORE THAN 19-YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR POSSESSING
A FIREARM AND AMMUNITION**

Tampa, FL - Today, United States District Judge Richard A. Lazzara sentenced, MARTIN ZARAGOZA to 19-years and seven months imprisonment on a one count indictment that charged ZARAGOZA with being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition.

On January 7, 2004, MARTIN ZARAGOZA, age 40, of Dade City, Florida, entered a guilty plea in federal court and admitted that on or about November 14, 2002, he possessed a stolen SIG Sauer .40 caliber pistol and ammunition. At the time the defendant possessed the above firearm and ammunition, he was a convicted felon.

This is another case indicted as a part the Department of Justice program "Project Safe Neighborhoods" - a nationwide gun violence reduction initiative with strong support from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF). U. S. Attorney Paul I. Perez is coordinating the cooperative effort here in the Middle District of Florida with federal, state and local law enforcement officials and calling our effort

“Project Safe Neighborhoods - Operation HALT the Violence!”. The objective is to reduce violent crime by locating and seizing unlawfully possessed guns and then swiftly prosecuting the offenders using both federal and state gun laws.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), the Pasco County Sheriff's Office, and the State Attorney's Office for the Sixth Judicial Circuit of Florida investigated the case. Assistant United States Attorney John F. Rudy, III prosecuted the case.